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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Report of the First (Economic) Committee

A. Trade and Development

1. The First (Economic) Committee considered the question of trade and development (agenda item 8 (a)) at its 1st to 3rd and 18th meetings, from 8 to 10 and on 24 July 1991. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Trade and Development Board on the second part of its thirty-seventh session (A/46/15 (vol. I)); 1/

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on institutional developments related to the strengthening of international organizations in the area of multilateral trade (E/1991/98).

2. At its 1st to 3rd meetings, the Committee held a general discussion on the questions of trade and development (agenda item 8 (a)) and food and agriculture (agenda item 8 (b)).

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 15 (A/46/15), vol. I.

GE.91-71423/3429B

3. At the 1st meeting, on 8 July, the Committee heard introductory statements by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Deputy to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

4. Also at the 1st meeting, statements were made on both questions by the representatives of Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Austria and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the observer for Egypt. The representative of the Commission of the European Communities also made a statement.

5. At the 2nd meeting, on 9 July, statements were made on both questions by the representatives of New Zealand, Japan, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Peru, Czechoslovakia, China and Pakistan and the observer for Australia.

6. At the 3rd meeting, on 10 July, statements were made on both questions by the representatives of Canada, Argentina, Morocco, Algeria, Indonesia, Mexico and Chile and the observers for Ghana (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77), the Sudan, Viet Nam, Uruguay and Senegal. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations made a statement. The observer for the World Confederation of Labour, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Council, category I, also made a statement.

Trade and development

7. At the 9th meeting, on 17 July, the observer for Ghana, 2/ on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77, introduced a draft resolution (E/1991/C.1/L.1) entitled "Trade and development", which read as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Taking note of the report of the Trade and Development Board on the second part of its thirty-seventh session (A/46/15 (vol. I)),

"Expressing satisfaction with the contribution of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to the final assessment of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 and to the follow-up of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s,

"1. Urges Governments to fulfil their commitments to halt and reverse protectionism, taking into account in particular the export interests of developing countries;

2/ In accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

"2. Expresses concern about the persistence of protectionist measures which adversely affect the export prospects and trade and development interests of developing countries and calls upon developed countries to reduce and eliminate such measures;

"3. Notes with appreciation the extensive unilateral trade liberalization measures implemented by developing countries and emphasizes the need for support of those measures by the international community;

"4. Emphasizes the importance of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which will be held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, in February 1992, as an important opportunity to address in an action-oriented manner crucial issues in the field of trade and development with a view to revitalizing growth and development in developing countries and contributing to the strengthening of multilateral cooperation."

8. At the 18th meeting, on 24 July, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Ahmed Amaziane (Morocco), introduced a draft resolution (E/1991/C.1/L.15), submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution E/1991/C.1/L.1.

9. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution E/1991/C.1/L.15 (see para. 11 below).

10. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution E/1991/C.1/L.15, draft resolution E/1991/C.1/L.1 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST (ECONOMIC) COMMITTEE

11. The First (Economic) Committee recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Trade and development

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of the report of the Trade and Development Board on the second part of its thirty-seventh session, 3/

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 15 (A/46/15), vol. I.

Expressing satisfaction with the contribution of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to the final assessment of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 4/ and to the follow-up of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, 5/

Noting with appreciation the declaration from the Summit of the seven major industrial nations, held in London in July 1991, which states that no issue has more far-reaching implications for the future prospects of the world economy than the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations,

Reaffirming the importance of a successful, balanced and early conclusion to the Uruguay Round,

1. Urges all Governments to fulfil their commitments undertaken in the Ministerial Declaration of the Uruguay Round 6/ and the Mid-Term Review Agreements, 7/ to halt and reverse protectionism;

2. Expresses concern about the persistence of protectionist measures which adversely affect trade and development, in particular that of developing countries, and, in this respect, emphasizes the importance of an early, comprehensive and balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, with the widest possible participation, resulting in the liberalization and expansion of world trade to the benefit of all countries, especially developing countries, in terms of both exports and substantially increased market access, taking into account the need to strengthen the economies and contribute to the growth and development of developing countries;

3. Notes with appreciation the extensive unilateral trade liberalization measures implemented in particular by an increasing number of developing countries and emphasizes the need for the international community to support those measures through an improved and conducive external economic environment;

4/ General Assembly resolution S-13/2.

5/ Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (A/CONF.147/18), part one.

6/ See GATT, Focus Newsletter, No. 41, October 1986.

7/ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, GATT Activities 1988 (Sales No. GATT/1989-2, annex I).

4. Emphasizes the importance of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to be held at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, in February 1992, as an opportunity to address crucial issues in the field of trade and development in an action-oriented manner, with a view to revitalizing growth and development, in particular of developing countries, and contributing to the strengthening of multilateral cooperation.

B. Food and agriculture

12. The First (Economic) Committee considered the question of food and agriculture (agenda item 8 (b)) at its 1st to 3rd, 9th and 18th meetings, from 8 to 10 and on 12 and 24 July 1991. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on trends in the international market for agricultural and tropical products and developments in the liberalization of international trade in agricultural and tropical products (E/1991/89);

(b) Note verbale dated 16 July 1991 from the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary of the Economic and Social Council (E/1991/119);

(c) Report of the World Food Council on the work of its seventeenth session (WFC/1991/11). 8/

13. At its 1st to 3rd meetings, the Committee held a general discussion on the question of food and agriculture in conjunction with the general discussion on the question of trade and development (see paras. 2 and 4-6 above).

14. At the 1st meeting, on 8 July, the Committee heard an introductory statement by the Executive Director of the World Food Council.

Food and agriculture

15. At its 9th meeting, on 12 July, the observer for Ghana, 2/ on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77, introduced a draft resolution (E/1991/C.1/L.2) entitled "Food and agriculture" which read as follows:

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Recalling General Assembly resolution 45/207 of 21 December 1990,

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8/ For the final text, see Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 19 (A/46/19).

"Recalling that in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, 9/ agriculture is one of the sectors for the reactivation of economic growth and development in the 1990s,

"Welcoming the conclusions and recommendations of the World Food Council at its seventeenth ministerial session 10/ and the message from the ministers of the United Nations World Food Council to the multilateral trade negotiators of the Uruguay Round, 11/

"Welcoming also the interregional consultation held in Cairo in April 1991 on meeting the developing countries' food production challenges of the 1990s and beyond, organized by the World Food Council and the United Nations Development Programme,

"Welcoming the Conference on Agriculture and Environment, held at Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands, in April 1991, organized by the Government of the Netherlands and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the Den Bosch Declaration and Agenda for Action for Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development,

"Stressing the importance of the assessments of food needs made by the Global Information and Early Warning System of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,

"Stressing also the importance of an adequate scientific and technological basis for increased food production and the existing link between agricultural research, technology transfer/extension and on-farm applications,

"Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on trends in the international market for agricultural and tropical products and developments in the liberalization of international trade in agricultural and tropical products, 12/

"1. Recognizes that if the challenges of increasing food production and productivity and food security are to be met in developing countries, new initiatives, including increased financial and technical assistance, to promote sustainable agricultural development in all countries, will be required;

9/ General Assembly resolution 45/199, annex.

10/ WFC/1991/11, part one.

11/ Ibid.

12/ E/1991/89.

"2. Stresses the importance of sustainable agricultural development and a fair and free system of agricultural trade to food security, taking into account the particular interests of net food-importing countries, and the necessity of ensuring that environmental protection concerns do not generate barriers to trade, thereby creating a new form of hidden protectionism;

"3. Urges the continuation and strengthening of cooperative arrangements to facilitate the enhancement of early warning of food shortages and assessment of food needs within the framework of the Global Information and Early Warning System of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;

"4. Urges an early, balanced and fully comprehensive conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, including the negotiations on agricultural and tropical products, in line with the Ministerial Declaration on the Uruguay Round 13/ and the Mid-Term Review Agreements; 14/

"5. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the World Food Council, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, for consideration under a sub-item of the agenda entitled "Food and agricultural development", an updated comprehensive report on trends in the international market for agricultural and tropical products and developments in the liberalization of international trade in agricultural and tropical products, taking into account the share of developing countries in such trade and the possible adverse short-term effects on net food-importing developing countries, and on the follow-up to the section on agriculture of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade."

16. At the 18th meeting, on 24 July, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Ahmed Amaziane (Morocco), introduced a draft resolution (E/1991/C.1/L.17), which had been submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution E/1991/C.1/L.2.

17. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution E/1991/C.1/L.17 (see para. 19 below).

18. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution E/1991/C.1/L.17, draft resolution E/1991/C.1/L.2 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

13/ See GATT, Focus Newsletter, No. 41, October 1986.

14/ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, GATT Activities, 1988 (Sales No. GATT/1989-2), annex I.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST (ECONOMIC) COMMITTEE

19. The First (Economic) Committee recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Food and agriculture

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 45/207 of 21 December 1990,

Recalling that in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, 15/ agriculture is one of the sectors for the reactivation of economic growth and development in the 1990s, and the eradication of hunger and poverty is one of the priority aspects of development,

Taking note with appreciation of the conclusions and recommendations of the World Food Council at its seventeenth ministerial session, 16/ and the message from the Ministers of the United Nations World Food Council to the multilateral trade negotiators of the Uruguay Round,

Also taking note with appreciation of the declaration from the Summit of the seven major industrial nations, held in London in July 1991, on the importance of a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations,

Stressing the importance of an adequate scientific and technological basis for increased food production and the existing link between agricultural research, technology transfer/extension and on-farm applications,

Welcoming the World Food Council/United Nations Development Programme Interregional Consultation on Meeting the Developing Countries' Food Production Challenges of the 1990s and Beyond, held at Cairo from 22 to 24 April 1991, 17/

15/ General Assembly resolution 45/199, annex.

16/ WFC/1991/11, part one.

17/ See WFC/1991/6/Add.1.

Welcoming the Conference on Agriculture and Environment, held at Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands, from 5 to 19 April 1991, organized by the Government of the Netherlands and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the Den Bosch Declaration and Agenda for Action for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development, 18/

Stressing the importance of the assessments of food needs made by the Global Information and Early Warning System of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on trends in the international market for agricultural and tropical products and developments in the liberalization of international trade in agricultural and tropical products, 19/

1. Recognizes that if the challenges of increasing food production and productivity and food security are to be met in developing countries, sustainable agricultural development in all countries should be promoted by new initiatives and by sound national policies;

2. Stresses the importance to food security of sustainable agricultural development and a fair and more free system of agricultural trade, taking into account the particular interests of net food-importing countries, and of the necessity of ensuring that environmental protection concerns do not generate unjustified barriers to trade, thereby creating a new form of hidden protectionism;

3. Urges the continuation and strengthening of cooperative arrangements to facilitate the enhancement of early warning of food shortages and assessment of food needs within the framework of the Global Information and Early Warning System of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;

4. Urges an early, balanced and fully comprehensive conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, including the negotiations on agricultural and tropical products, in line with the Ministerial Declaration on the Uruguay Round 20/ and the Mid-Term Agreements; 21/

18/ CL 99/23, appendix A.

19/ E/1991/89.

20/ See GATT, Focus Newsletter. No. 41, October 1986.

21/ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, GATT Activities, 1988 (Sales No. GATT/1989-2), annex I.

5. Endorses the message from the ministers of the World Food Council to the multilateral trade negotiators of the Uruguay Round 22/ and the call from representatives of the seven major industrial nations at the Summit held in London in July 1991 for all contracting parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to aim to complete the Uruguay Round before the end of 1991;

6. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the World Food Council, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, for consideration under the sub-item of the agenda entitled "Food and agricultural development", an updated comprehensive report on trends in the international market for agricultural and tropical products and developments in the liberalization of international trade in agricultural and tropical products, taking into account the share of developing countries in such trade and the possible adverse short-term effects on net food-importing developing countries, and on the follow-up to the section on agriculture of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade.

22/ WFC/1991/11, part one.